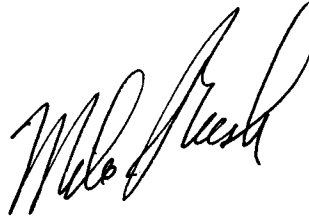


TRANSMITTAL # 8

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 5, 2002
FROM: Dr. Mike Rush, State Administrator
SUBJECT: JOBS FOR AMERICA'S GRADUATES



ACTION REQUESTED: Decision whether or not to continue national *Jobs for America's Graduates* Affiliation

BACKGROUND:

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) is a nationwide dropout prevention, school-to-career, and dropout recovery program for at-risk and disadvantaged youth. The Idaho affiliate is called *Jobs for Idaho's Graduates* (JIDG). Six pilot programs were launched in 2001. One is a drop-out recovery program serving out-of-school youth which has been operational since July 2001. The other five are senior-year programs serving seniors at risk of not graduating, which have been operational since the fall of 2001. The pilot programs are demonstrating success. A presentation of these programs will be made at this meeting.

All programs are currently operating within the framework of an existing educational entity, such as Adult Basic Education (drop-out recovery program), the Individualized Occupational Training program (IOT) or the Teen Parenting Center. Funding was provided from the Department of Health & Welfare (TANF), through the Department of Labor to the Division of Professional-Technical Education. Much of the overhead costs and operating expenses come from the educational institutions in which the programs are housed.

As the pilot projects face the end of the first year, the question is raised: how will they be sustained? Staff from each region have been making presentations and trying to locate local funds to sustain their program. None have guaranteed funding yet for next year.

The other issue that needs addressing is whether or not to affiliate with the national JAG organization. There is an annual fee to affiliate which varies between \$6,250 (our first year) and \$12,500 (projected for next year). The advantages of affiliation include:

- (1) national technical support;
- (2) national training conferences (professional development)
- (3) national curriculum and materials
- (4) national Student Leadership Conference
- (5) being one of 27 states in the national JAG network

The disadvantages are primarily financial:

- (1) \$12,500 annual fee
- (2) staff time to administer the program and meet national requirements
- (3) travel expenses to attend national JAG meetings

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the recommendation of the Division that—

- (1) the existing pilot programs be sustained; and
- (2) national affiliation with JAG be dropped; and
- (3) the \$12,500 JAG fee for next year be distributed among the existing pilot programs.

RATIONALE:

The programs are already operating within an existing educational structure. To address sustainability issues, the best strategy appears to be to incorporate the concepts of JAG within that structure, in collaboration with other organizations such as the Workforce Investment Boards and/or their Youth Councils. Funding would have to be shared by the educational institution and other local agencies. Through the Individualized Occupational Training program, student organizations, school-to-work curriculum and other educational resources, the program could continue without national JAG affiliation.